



# National Senior Service Corps

The National Senior Service Corps is part of the service network of the Corporation for National Service.

The National Senior Service Corps is a network of more than half a million seniors who are making a difference as Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteers. These programs tap the experience, skills, talents, interests, and creativity of seniors age 55 and over.

Senior Corps participants are committed to sharing their life experience in order to help solve critical local problems in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, and other human needs. Some help just a few hours a week. Others do 20 hours or more of service every week. Senior Corps volunteers serve in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

**Foster Grandparents** provide invaluable aid to more than 80,000 children and youth with exceptional needs. In improving the lives of the children they serve, Foster Grandparents also profoundly enrich their own lives. Foster Grandparents serve 20 hours a week in schools, hospitals, correctional institutions, and Head Start centers. They help children who have been abused or neglected, mentor troubled teenagers and young mothers, and care for premature infants and children with physical disabilities.

**Senior Companions** provide assistance and friendship to seniors who have difficulty with their daily living tasks - helping them retain their independence rather than having to move to expensive institutionalized care. Senior Companions assist with chores such as paying bills, grocery shopping, and find-

ing transportation to medical appointments. They usually serve two to four clients during their 20 hours of service each week. Senior Companions receive training in topics such as Alzheimer's disease, strokes, diabetes, and mental health.

The **Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)** is one of the largest volunteer efforts in the nation—matching local problems with people age 55 and older who are willing to help. RSVP volunteers choose how and where they want to serve. Volunteers organize neighborhood watch programs, tutor English to immigrants, program computers, help people recover from natural disasters—whatever their skills and interests lead them to do.

## The Senior Corps: A Smart Investment

Besides the personal benefits to both the volunteers and the people who are served, Senior Corps programs make a valuable impact in communities for a minimal investment:

- Approximately 80,000 children, teenagers, and their families are supported by the services of Foster Grandparents every year.
- Nearly 24,000 Foster Grandparents contribute almost 22 million hours of service annually. The value of this service

is \$286 million and represents more than a four-fold return on the federal dollars invested in the program.

- The Foster Grandparent Program's fiscal 1996 budget of \$61.9 million was matched with \$31.5 million dollars in cash and donations from states and the local communities in which Foster Grandparents serve. This represents a nonfederal match of 51 cents for every federal dollar invested—well over the 10 percent match required by law.
- Almost 12,000 Senior Companions provide 11 million hours of service annually to help nearly 40,000 elderly individuals live independently. The estimated value of these services is almost \$150 million—representing a five-fold return on the federal dollars invested in the program.
- The average cost of nursing home care in the United States exceeds \$38,000 annually. The annual cost for one Senior Companion serving 20 hours per week is \$3,850.
- The Senior Companion Program's fiscal 1996 budget of \$31 million was supplemented by \$18.8 million in cash and in-kind donations from states and the local communities in which Senior Companions serve. This represents a nonfederal match of 61 percent, or 51 cents for every federal dollar invested—well over the 10 percent match required by law.
- Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteers provide more than 85 million hours of service annually to communities across the country. The value of this service is about \$1.2 billion and represents a 35-fold return on the federal dollars invested in RSVP.
- Over 455,000 RSVP volunteers serve through more than 63,000 public and nonprofit community organizations.
- RSVP's fiscal 1996 federal budget of \$34.3 million was matched with \$38.9 million contributed by states, local governments, and the private sector, demonstrating broad support for RSVP across the country.

The Corporation for National Service offers opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to make their communities safer, healthier, and stronger through service. In addition to the National Senior Service Corps, the corporation oversees AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America.

**Senior Corps information:**  
**1-800-424-8867**  
**TDD: 1-800-833-3722**

